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17. ABSTRACT (MAX. 250 WORDS) The objectives of Project Reentry, conducted during the summer of 1963 and 1964, were to guide potential and actual dropouts back to secondary school through counseling and to provide a meaningful school program for those who returned. Statistical information for New York State indicated that 953 actual and 722 potential dropouts were contacted and that 19 and 85 percent respectively returned to school in September. Local efforts and results for each reentry district were listed.

Miscellaneous notes from reentry district reports were categorized according to organization of the project, how contacts were made, the content of contacts, transfer of information, special attention given to the returnees, observations, and recommendations.

Reentry counselors were primarily responsible for contacting students. They were aided by principals and other counselors. Interview outlines were developed in some districts. Before school opened, reminder letters were sent to pupils contacted during the summer. A list of returnees who seemed likely to require attention was sent to the attendance officer of the school involved. Contacts were made by letter, through home or school visits, and by telephone.

During contacts, counselors tried to arrange for pupils to return to day or evening school, to visit employment offices, or to contact specific community agencies if necessary. Counselors tried to build programs that allowed for part-time employment. Recommendations for improving the program included the need for more information on the alternatives pupils can be offered, the inclusion of the entire school staff in planning, continuation of the program throughout the school year, a widening of curriculum to include more courses suited to the needs and abilities of potential dropouts, work-study programs for returnees, and more vocational education and remedial programs.

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Office of Education

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INTERIM REPORT

Project Reentry

VT0762 ED002544

Table A

Summary
Contacts and Returns *
Potential and Actual Dropouts

	Number Contacted			Percent Present 9/22		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Actual Dropouts	597	356	953	21	16	19
Potential Dropouts	458	264	722	86	84	85

* Status as of September 22 in 6 of 8 Reentry Districts

Table B

Local Program Dimensions
(Data available 11/4/64)

Reentry District	Dropouts Contacted Actual (No.)	Potential (No.)	Counselor Days (No.)	Contacts / Counselor Day * (No.)	Clerical Days (No.)
Albany	95	61	40	3.9	0
Buffalo	100	376	120	4.0	0
Mount Vernon	329	0	35	9.4	13.5
New Rochelle	72	8	—	—	—
Niagara Falls	132	232	63	5.8	0
Schenectady	18	31	15	3.3	—
Yonkers	302	75	78	4.8	0

* Sum of actual and potential dropouts contacted divided by counselor days.

Table C

Local Efforts to Return Actual Dropouts
and Results

Details
(Percent of number contacted in Summer 1964)

Efforts	Total	Reentry Districts					
		Buffalo	Mount Vernon	New Rochelle	Niagara Falls	Schenectady	Yonkers
1. Type of contact							
a. Personal							
(1) home visits	32	95	9	1	25	39	45
(2) school interviews	8	0	8	61	0	0	3
(3) both	3	5	3	4	0	39	0
b. Telephone only	30	0	76	6	0	0	12
c. Other	5	0	3	28	0	0	5
2. Families in which at least one adult was reached							
a. personally	33	94	5	24	72	72	27
b. telephone and other	20	5	23	42	3	11	23
Results							
Contacted actual dropouts percent 9/22	19	25	16	54	15	50	12

Table D

Local Efforts to Return Potential Dropouts
and Results

Details
(Percent of number contacted in Summer 1964)

Efforts	Total	Reentry Districts				
		Buffalo	New Rochelle *	Niagara Falls	Schenectady	Yonkers
1. Type of contact						
a. personal						
(1) home visits	66	97	0	35	99	0
(2) school interviews	1	0	(7 of 8)	0	0	0
(3) both	2	3	(1 of 8)	0	10	0
b. telephone only	10	0	0	0	0	100
c. other.	0	0	0	0	0	0
2. Families in which at least one adult was reached						
a. personally	75	97	(1 of 8)	64	81	0
b. telephone and other	6	2	(7 of 8)	0	0	40
Results						
Contacted potential dropouts present 9/22	85	84	(8 of 8)	89	87	76

* Because only 8 potential dropouts were contacted, no percents are reported.

Notes From Reentry District Reports

Fall 1964

The items below were taken from the narrative section of the Reentry districts' interim reports. An attempt was made to include accounts of practices which were representative and/or especially promising with the thought that thereby a realistic description of the program might be offered and avenues for its future development suggested. The recommendations and observations are also those which appeared in the local reports. Except in a few instances, no practice, observation, or recommendation appeared in the reports of all districts.

Organization

1. Several districts developed an interview outline to guide counselors in their contacts with pupils and parents.

2. Letters were sent to pupils contacted during the summer immediately prior to the reopening of school to remind them of the desirability of returning.

3. Principals and counselors on duty during the summer offered much assistance to the Reentry counselor in reprogramming pupils.

4. Reentry counselors served areas of the city in teams of two.

5. In preparation for their work Reentry counselors familiarized themselves with local alternatives to a full return to the regular session (evening high school, NYSES, equivalency program, trade schools, etc.)

6. Reentry counselors reviewed their task with the high school principal and his assistant before contacting any pupils.

7. Reentry counselors surveyed the status of summer school pupils at the close of the session to determine if any might become dropouts.

8. Pupils were directed to report to the Reentry counselor the first day of school. Registration for classes was completed by counselor and pupil before school reopened.

9. An objective of the contact was the development of a schedule of courses on a special form for this purpose. A copy was presented to the pupil and another copy was forwarded to the pupil's assigned counselor.

10. In a district where a single Reentry counselor returned pupils to several schools, as pupils faltered, their assigned counselors were urged to advise the Reentry counselor who then renewed his contacts with the pupils and their parents.

11. Reentry counselors, at the end of their assignment, compiled a list of returnees who seemed likely to require early attention for the information of the attendance officer.

Contacts

1. Letters were sent to both pupils and parents advising them that a Reentry counselor would be glad to see them either at school or in their homes.

2. Counselors arranged to see pupils and parents at their places of employment.

3. Multiple visits were made in a number of cases.

Content of Contacts

1. Counselors attempted to arrange for pupils to return to day school, evening school, to visit the NYSES office, or to use the resources of USAFI if they were bound for the armed forces. Adult education and the local training available under MDTA were stressed in one district.

2. Counselors referred pupils and parents to community agencies as it seemed appropriate.

3. To open interviews, several counselors sought suggestions for improving the school program.

4. The need to develop skills to participate fully in the labor market was emphasized.

5. Counselors attempted to build pupil programs to permit part-time employment.

6. Most counselors avoided stress upon the negative aspects of early school leaving, preferring that such be mentioned by pupils or parents if at all.

7. Counselors realistically reviewed with pupils the problems they would face upon their return to school. The importance of improving study habits was discussed.

8. Some counselors illustrated for parents specific ways in which they could assist the pupil to succeed in school.

Transfer of Information

1. Reentry counselors frequently communicated with the counselors to whom pupils were formerly assigned as they worked with them during the summer.

2. "Data concerning those dropouts who expressed a desire to return to day school and/or evening school was submitted to the counselor responsible for the student."

3. The Reentry counselor met with the counselors in each school to which contacted pupils returned to discuss his efforts and outcomes and to transfer Reentry records.

Fall School Supports

1. All Reentry pupils were assigned to the Reentry counselor permanently. Pupils were encouraged to contact him "at the first sign of trouble."

2. A form letter was sent to each teacher assigned a returned Reentry pupil explaining the program and the pupil's need for assistance and encouragement.

3. Returned pupils were scheduled for at least one interview each week.

Observations

1. August may be a better month than July for Reentry. Students are more actively formulating decisions; also interest stimulated may be more easily sustained than over a two month interval.

2. Reentry loses its effectiveness if only the concern of the guidance department.

3. Reentry benefits to counselors are considerable, particularly in enhancing their appreciation of the problems of disadvantaged pupils and their parents. Home visits contribute importantly to this outcome.

4. It was difficult to develop a roster of pupils to contact because the project was announced late in the school year.

5. Reentry counselors were less concerned with where dropouts continued their education than that they continued somewhere.

6. Some pupils and parents were seen by Reentry counselors a number of times.

7. For the program to succeed, there must be good rapport between counselors and teachers.

8. Almost without exception, parents welcomed the efforts of Reentry counselors to assist their children. Most parents wanted their children to return.

9. Several districts found Reentry yielded unexpected community good will.

10. "Pushouts" were a problem. To a degree they were uncertain of the validity of the invitation to return. One district conditioned their return upon the outcome of an interview with their building principal or vice-principal.

11. Many pupils contacted were unfamiliar with the opportunities for study in evening schools.

12. When pupils are returned to schools other than the one to which his Reentry counselor is assigned, full follow-up is difficult.

13. In one district, Reentry counselors were alarmed at the number of pregnancies among the girls they contacted.

14. The local telephone company proved to be an excellent resource in tracing families who had moved from the address listed in the school records.

Recommendations

1. Reentry counselors need more information concerning the alternatives which can be offered pupils.

2. Planning should include administrators and other staff members. Insofar as possible, the entire school staff should be involved.

3. The program should be established permanently. Counselors should be assigned to offer special assistance to potential dropouts, actual dropouts, and their parents throughout the year. One such counselor should be available in each building. "If the program was conducted during the year, many potential dropouts would be prevented from leaving."

4. Curricular offerings should be widened to include more courses close to the needs and abilities of these students.

5. Work-study programs should be established for returning students.

6. Vocational education programs should be provided for Reentry pupils.

7. Remedial instruction should be available for returned pupils.

Project Reentry, modeled after President Kennedy's Summer Dropout Program of 1963, has been conducted during the summers of 1963 and 1964. Counselors contact potential and actual dropouts to guide them back to school. Efforts before and after the summer contact period are made to assist staff members to provide a meaningful school program for those who return. Information on Reentry is available upon request.

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